

R&I MENU CONCEPTS

Slow summers and retirees' limited income challenge independent operators.

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AN IRISH ACCENT

His ex-boss and some of his friends told him he was crazy to open an Irish-theme restaurant and bar in Palm Beach Gardens in South Florida, but Kenneth G. Wade isn't from Ireland for nothing. When he left Harpoon House's in Jupiter, Fla., after 14 years because the restaurant was sold to a chain of crab houses, this chef who led the United States' South-eastern regional team to a second-place win (among 51 teams worldwide) in the 1992 "culinary olympics" in Frankfurt, Germany, decided to be his own boss.

So far, everything's coming up roses

with *platanos* (fried plantains) and white rice for \$11.95. The *arrug con pollo* (chicken with rice) is a best seller, and consists of a quarter chicken baked with yellow rice, green pep-

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for Wade, whose 160-seat Paddy Mac's opened last December. One reason is the fact that he capitalizes on the sheer abundance of seafood caught off Florida shores, which makes sense; Wade is quick to remind those who question his choice of concept that Ireland is surrounded by water, too.

"Americans don't understand what Irish cuisine is all about," says Wade. "I wanted to show people the excellent deep dishes, but also the excellent seafood, which is Irish cuisine's biggest attribute."

Patrons visiting the restaurant for the first time do so for a taste of traditional Irish fare such as steak and mushroom pie—tender beef tips sautéed with mushrooms and onions and baked under pastry crust in beef gravy flavored with Irish stout—for \$8.95. Or chicken Tipperary: breast of chicken with apple and almond stuffing baked with wild honey and whiskey sauce for \$10.95. But they come back for the seafood.

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Roasted dolphin-fish crusted with four types of crushed nuts at Paddy Mac's, Palm Beach Gardens, is accompanied by mashed potatoes flavored with ingredients that lend the side dish the colors of the Irish flag: carrots, spinach and garlic.



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